

What is a Healthy Relationship?

Young people need to know that shared values, respect, and kindness are important in a relationship. Find opportunities—a movie, a TV show, music—to talk to your teen about dating. You can open up the conversation by saying:

- “I want you to have a boyfriend/girlfriend who respects you.”
- “I want you to have a boyfriend/girlfriend you feel really comfortable being around.”
- “I want you to enjoy your relationship with your boyfriend/girlfriend and enjoy fulfilling and healthy relationships with other people who care for you.”

Bring the issue of healthy relationships into full focus by asking your teen what is important to them in a relationship. Here are some questions you can ask to get a talk going about relationships:

- What would your ideal relationship be like?
- What are you looking for in a boyfriend/girlfriend?
- What comes to your mind when you think of real love?
- What do you think an abuse relationship would look and feel like?
- Do you know anyone who has a healthy relationship? What about an unhealthy relationship? Why do you think their relationship is healthy/unhealthy?

By sharing your values and listening to what is important to your teen, you can help him/her think about what she or he really wants in a relationship.

